In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for the treatment of a patient with or at risk of hepatic encephalopathy (HE) characterized by hyperammonemia, comprising: ~~orally administering to the patient a liquid drink composition comprising polyethylene glycol (PEG) in an amount sufficient to reduce ammonia plasma levels in the patient.~~

providing a pharmaceutical composition substantially free of serum electrolytes and comprising polyethylene glycol (PEG);

formulating a liquid drink by admixing the composition with a pharmaceutically-acceptable aqueous carrier; and

orally administering the liquid drink composition to the patient in an amount and frequency sufficient to reduce patient plasma to a clinically-acceptable level, or to maintain this level, or both, without cleansing the bowel.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the composition ~~consists~~ is a dry composition consisting essentially of PEG.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein the composition is administered in single dosages each comprising from about 5 to 35 gm of dry PEG dissolved in aqueous liquid.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~4~~ 33, wherein the composition comprises from about 0.15 to 3.5 parts by weight PEG to 1 part lactulose.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~5~~ 33, wherein the composition comprises from about 0.5 to 3 parts by weight PEG to 1 part by weight lactulose.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~1~~ 34, wherein the composition is administered in single dosages each comprising ~~from~~ about 5 to 35 gm of dry PEG dissolved in the aqueous carrier ~~liquid~~.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7, wherein each single dosage further comprises ~~from~~ about 10 to 30 gm of dry lactulose dissolved in the aqueous carrier ~~liquid~~.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein each dosage comprises ~~from~~ about 10 to 20 gm PEG and 10 to 20 gm lactulose.

10. (Currently Amended) A pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of ~~HE~~ a patient with or at risk of HE characterized by hyperammonemia comprising PEG and lactulose.

11. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 10 comprising ~~from~~ about 0.15 to 3.5 parts by weight PEG to 1 part by weight lactulose.

12. (Currently Amended) A single dosage of the composition ~~for the treatment of HE~~ of claim 10 comprising ~~from~~ about 5 to 35 gm of PEG.

13. (Currently Amended) The single dosage composition of claim 12, further comprising ~~from~~ about 10 to 30 gm of lactulose.

14. (Currently Amended) The single dosage composition of claim 13, comprising ~~from~~ about 10 to 20 gm PEG and 10 to 20 gm lactulose.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method ~~according to~~ of claim 1, wherein the PEG is solid at room temperature.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method ~~according to claim 4~~ of claim 33, wherein the PEG is solid at room temperature.

17. (Previously Amended) A composition according to claim 10, wherein the PEG is solid at room temperature.

18. (Currently Amended) A composition according to claim ~~12~~ 13, wherein the PEG is solid at room temperature.

19. (Previously Amended) A composition according to claim 10, wherein the lactulose and PEG are each a dry powder.

20. (Previously Amended) A composition according to claim 13, wherein the lactulose and PEG are each a dry powder.

21. (Previously Amended) A composition according to claim 14, wherein the lactulose and PEG are each a dry powder.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~4~~ 33, wherein the composition is substantially free of serum electrolytes.

24. (Currently Amended) A composition according to claim 10, wherein the composition is substantially free of serum electrolytes.

25. (Currently Amended) A composition according to claim ~~12~~ 13, wherein the composition is substantially free of serum electrolytes.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the composition is administered on a continuing basis in at least one single dosage per day.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~8~~ 3, wherein the composition is administered on a continuing basis in at least one single dosage per day.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of the composition administered is sufficient to alleviate constipation in the patient.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~4~~ 33, wherein the amount of the composition administered is sufficient to alleviate constipation in the patient.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (New) A method for the treatment of a patient with or at risk of HE characterized by hyperammonemia, comprising administering to the patient a composition comprising PEG and lactulose in an amount and frequency sufficient to reduce patient plasma ammonia to a clinically-acceptable level, or to maintain this level, or both.

34. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein the composition is formulated as a liquid drink by admixture with a pharmaceutically-acceptable aqueous carrier and orally administered to the patient.

35. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein the composition is administered on a continuing basis in at least one single dosage per day.

36. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein the composition is administered on a continuing basis in at least one single dosage per day.

37. (New) The composition of claim 10 comprising from about 0.5 to 3 parts by weight PEG to 1 part by weight lactulose.